

(LCN Connections Issue 18 – October 2016)

## **LCN REORGANIZATION WITHIN THE U.S.**

*by Tip Walker*



The LCN Leadership Council has carefully studied the rate of growth of our organization over the past two years. We have looked at this in terms of the number of active local chapters and participants. Our numbers have remained fairly constant with little or no growth. This is despite a lot of time and effort on the part of Leadership Council members, Regional Coordinators, and Local Chapter Leaders.

A lot of our collective time and energy has gone into connecting interested individuals with local chapters. The way it has worked in the past for people in the U.S. is as follows. A person interested in connecting with a local chapter would complete an online form on the LCN page of the TMI website which would be automatically forwarded to the respective Regional Coordinator and to the LCN Leadership Council. The Regional Coordinator would then serve as an intermediary between the person making the inquiry and the Local Chapter Leader. The Local Chapter Leader would then extend an invitation to the person who had expressed an interest. In many cases the person would neither acknowledge receipt of the invitation nor attend a meeting. Because we still have relatively few chapters in the U.S., there are many instances where the Regional Coordinator would need to tell the person that there was no local chapter in their area. While all of this was going on, the LCN Leadership Council member responsible for monitoring the LCN Gmail Account would assist if at some point there was a breakdown in communication. Sometimes the elapsed time from when a person made an inquiry to when they would receive an invitation from a Chapter Leader could be a week or more. In our cyber-based world of communication, a week is an eternity and much too long for most people to wait or maintain focus and interest.

In an effort to simplify our local chapter referral process within the U.S., the LCN Leadership Council decided to remove the Regional Coordinator tier of the LCN

organization. As of August 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, if a person is interested in finding a local chapter, they can go directly to the LCN section of the TMI website by clicking on the Community tab and scrolling down to Local Chapters. After reading some background information about the LCN, they can then click on their respective Region which will take them to a page where there is a list of chapters by location, along with the name of the chapter leader and contact information. If they wish to join a chapter, they can then contact the Chapter Leader directly. We are hoping that this more direct system will be quicker and more effective and result in more people joining existing chapters.

For those people who are not able to find a local chapter within a reasonable distance of where they live, they are invited to start their own chapter if they have completed one of the following three TMI foundational programs: 1) *Gateway Voyage®* – residential, 2) *Two-day Outreach Excursion Workshop*, or 3) *Gateway Experience® Online Program Waves I & II*. If they have completed one of these programs, they are invited to complete a simple online form which is then forwarded to the LCN Leadership Council. A Council member will then promptly respond and begin a systematic process of working with the person to establish their own local chapter. Ongoing support and mentoring will continue to be made available to chapter leaders (new and old).

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the following people who were serving as Regional Coordinators before the reorganization of the LCN: David Baird, Steve Winchester, Ellen Jones-Walker, Candie Sanderson, Lisa Reber, Chris Nance, Deryn Winchester, Cindy Lyn Bartholome, Diane Dyann, Fred Rible, & Beth Haley. We would, of course, also like to express our thanks to all other individuals who served in this capacity at earlier times.

Now with the above changes fully implemented, we (the LCN Leadership Council) would like to focus our energies on providing quality support to leaders of current and future local chapters. We have developed a systematic protocol for the establishment of new chapters which provides direct online and phone support to qualified individuals who wish to establish their own local chapters. We are also working on new ways to connect people who live in areas far removed from a local chapter. We hope to include more information about this exciting development in a future edition of *LCN Connections*. Stay tuned!

Tip Walker

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